

ARBORIVITAL MEDICINE.

BEING AN INQUIRY INTO THE CURATIVE POWERS OF SOME OF
OUR COMMON FIELD AND GARDEN PLANTS, JUDGED
OF BY THE DISEASES OF THE EAR.

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IN proceeding to give the results of my investigation of the action of drugs, I do not wish to commit myself to any prearranged plan, and desire merely to state that facts will be given as they come in as much as possible in narrative form, and with such arrangement only as these admit of. Though dealing with ear diseases almost exclusively, the disturbances produced or removed in other organs of the body will be carefully and assiduously noted ; this being, as I conceive, the scientific method of procedure in specialism. The idea is to give a case of disease, thought to be typical of the drug's action, that has been cured or in any way modified by such action and then if necessary to comment upon this and illustrate remark by less important experiences from time to time met with. For the sake of brevity the sthenogram, ϕA , after a drug will mean that one drop of the arborivital tincture has been given and that this has been allowed to act till the next mentioned date ; if the dose has been repeated frequently this will be distinctly stated, though of course *ipso facto* the remedy will then cease to be arborivital. The tinctures I use have been made by myself, except a few of the early ones which were medicated expressly for me, from my own specimens, by a trustworthy chemist, and it is to be remembered that they are not by any means the strongest in material ingredients that can be prepared, while to

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some of those, many times used, additional alcohol has been freely added from time to time to prevent evaporation. All I aim at in the preparation of a tincture is to secure and preserve the growth-force, and to prepare the tincture in such a way as to leave as little doubt as possible about its presence. For this reason I advocate the preparation of arborivital tinctures in the field from the living plant, the preparer carrying with him a small phial, into which the budding stalk and young leaves of the plant are placed fresh as they grow, and upon these, simply crushed between finger and thumb, the rectified spirit should be poured. But more than this, in order to further increase the efficacy of the tincture and to secure with even greater certainty the power of the growth-force, I am in the habit of plunging the living stalk, while yet connected with the plant, into the spirit, and allowing the strongest daylight that usually plays upon the plant in its native habitat, to fall upon the phial filled with the spirit, the stalk being at the same time immersed in it. Thus our tinctures are presumably potentized, and each potentization will represent five minutes exposure. When the branches are thus subjected to the spirit and the daylight for an hour, I find the branch and its leaves have in most cases withered; at the termination, therefore, of each twelfth potency a fresh branch or stalk should be chosen and subjected to the same process. A number before the sthenogram will therefore indicate the potency, thus : *Plantago lanceolata* 12, ϕA , will be *plantago lanceolata*, 12th arborivital mother tincture. Such 12th and 24th potencies I have used pretty extensively, and believe that thus potentized the remedy has a more certain curative influence.

To say that such preparations are stronger than others, as has been claimed for the homœopathic dilutions, would require a definition of the word stronger, and I therefore avoid this statement purposely ; all I commit myself to is that tinctures thus potentized represent powers different from those prepared in the ordinary way, and that their curative properties are, as far as I can judge from clinical experience, more certain. The arborivital tinctures will, therefore, be potentized directly from the plants as they grow, and are hence, to coin a word, termed *heliosthens*, and a drop of a high *heliosthen*, say 12 or 24, will mean a drop of as definite material strength as it is possible to obtain from a plant by the action of rectified spirit upon it, plus any strength communicated to it by our method of potentizing, and which of necessity is of purely hypothetical quantity. At the same time the force associated with the material parti-

cles of the plant, the original growth-force, and the force derived from potentization by means of exposure of the living plant in spirit will represent as nearly as possible, each of them, a definite power, which in contrast with ordinary homœopathic preparations is in every way a gain.

Agraphis Nutans, vel *Hyacinthus Nutans*, vel *Hyacinthus Non-Scriptus*, the common bluebell of the woods, natural order Liliaceæ.

Tincture made with rectified spirit and juice of the budding stalk and young leaves, March, 1892.

This remedy which was one of the first that engaged my attention and which has continued to interest me more and more every day, possesses an action that seems in every way definite and distinct.

The plant itself has at all times been a favorite ; one of our earliest spring flowers, it brightens and lends color in the early year to our faded woods. The bluebell shades itself in shrubberies, and while nestling close to the wood-anemone takes care to be well shaded by the smaller hazel twigs, beneath which it is so often found, from the cold easterly breezes.

Its action as a remedy finds remarkable illustration in the case of a little girl of five years of age living at Brixton, who was admitted under me at the L. H. Hospital June 11, 1892, with deafness and otorrhœa of both ears, dating twelve months back, and a history of three bad attacks of bronchitis ; one at a year old, second at two years, and a third at three. Her eyes and nose discharged profusely and had to be bathed every morning.

The little girl has always been subject to cough, and for four or five months has been bringing up dark gray mucus. Bowels are regular, appetite poor, pines constantly and perspires much in bed ; watch distance not taken.*

Agraphis Nutans, ϕ A. – June 25, 1892, altogether better but has some hacking cough with beady phlegm first thing in the morning, discharge much less from both eyes and nose. S. L., 2–3 a day. †

August 6, 1892.—Once during the interval a discharge, vaginal in situation and catamenial in appearance, was noticed but did not continue. In every possible way the child has improved ; hearing much better, the eyes and nose no longer require bathing, and though discharge is still seen it is very much less.

* I find it useless to test the watch hearing of children under six years of age, their answers are so misleading.

† *Saccharum lactis*, two pilules thrice daily *et seq.*

Agraphis Nutans, ϕ A.—This was the patient's last attendance, a cure having, with scarcely a doubt, been effected.

The case is in every way characteristic of the remedy, a tendency to free discharge from mucous membranes, a relaxed condition of the system generally and a proneness to take cold on exposure to cold winds. Its action certainly reminds us of *scilla maritima*, next to which it is usually described in works on botany, both being of the same natural order, the *liliaceæ*.

I have seen, however, sufficient of the action of the remedy to convince me that there are strong points of difference between the two, and that in the bluebell of the wood we have a remedy for children which in some points is of extreme importance. Bear in mind the improvement above recorded resulted from a single dose ; the occurrence of vaginal discharges while under the influence of the remedy is very interesting, for more than once I have observed irregularities in this sphere of the organism to be modified by it. There was no change of diet or mode of living whatever, and a like remark applies to all cases unless otherwise stated.

Another case we may mention is that of a girl $\text{æt. } 5\frac{1}{2}$ years, for whom on the 10th September, 1892, *agraphis nutans* was prescribed. She had had sore throat a week ago leaving profuse discharge from the left ear with deafness, the child's general condition being feeble. On the 24th September, improvement in every way was recorded, child every way stronger and better, ear discharge much less and deafness apparently gone.

In the case of a girl of 12 where post-nasal growths and enlarged tonsils had followed upon diphtheria some six years previously, a single dose of *agraphis nutans* was followed by a lessening of the symptoms, viz. : talking in sleep, mouth open, fulness of the tonsils, twitchings of the nose, loss of smell, recurring colds in the head ; and improvement has continued under the same given at intervals of several weeks.

A governess of 30 admitted the 10th September, 1892, very deaf in both ears for five years, with hissing tinnitus, cause unknown, very nervous and weak, easily tired, constant headache across the forehead and bridge of the nose, aggravated by high winds (has just returned from sea voyage which in every way made her ears worse), dry feeling and burning in the throat, monthly period followed by profuse leucorrhœa, no pain or backache. M. Ti.* natural, watch distance R. $\frac{1}{2}$ in., L. not contact, *agraphis nutans*, ϕ A. October 1st,

* *I.e.*, membranæ tympani.

1892, much improved, tinnitus less, head lighter, deafness appears less, and a symptom which used to trouble her a good deal, viz. : cracking in the head when bending down as if a bell were ringing, is much less. Leucorrhœa is certainly very much less.—H. D. R., $\frac{1}{2}$ in. L. C.

Another case that is interesting as pointing to the action of *agaphis nutans* is one to which my attention was called a few weeks ago. A young lady who had been my patient as an infant, but who has now arrived at the interesting time of 15, has suffered nearly all her life from enlarged tonsils with post-nasal growths ; so much so that some years ago I advised their removal. After this she fell into the hands of other practitioners, one of whom is a specialist in throat affections ; he too advised removal. At this juncture her mother wished me, as I had known her in her infancy, to again see her and pass an opinion upon her case. I strongly dissuaded them from proceeding to operation and sent one drop of the *agaphis* ; at the end of the first fortnight the report was improvement, but nothing very distinct, especially as regards the tonsils ; another drop was then given and at the end of the second fortnight the report was, undoubtedly improvement has taken place in every respect ; the tonsils are much smaller and in every way the throat feels more comfortable.

In quite a large number of cases I have seen evidence to convince me that chronically enlarged tonsils can be modified in size by the *agaphis nutans* given as I recommend.

But of all of the conditions that are to be met with, there is one in the treatment of which the *agaphis* stands forth unrivalled and as far as I know inimitable. This is in the treatment of the mutism of children. When a child rising to 4 or 5 years of age is unable to speak, especially if unable to drink properly, and if along with this it is found that his hearing is perfect, there is one remedy which in every way gives reason for encouragement in the treatment of such a case, and this is *agaphis nutans*. A mute child incapable of drinking or of closing the jaws properly is almost certainly the victim of post-nasal growths, but along with these growths it will be found that all the glandular structures connected with the buccal and nasal cavities are imperfectly developed and are presumably interfering with the muscular action of the jaws ; if the child dribbles this will be all the more indication of its condition ; for such a child we can prescribe the *agaphis nutans* with greater probability of success than any other remedy that I know of.

There is at present attending the hospital a young, finely developed man, a deaf-mute, who retains a slight amount of hearing and a slight power of speech. To this man I gave a short time ago one drop of the agraphis and the testimony of those about him was that most unmistakably his power of speech improved immediately afterwards. This perhaps is not saying much, but to me it shows that the remedy at least pointed in the right direction.

And when, side by side with this case, I treated a little deaf-mute three years old that dribbled from the corners of the mouth, and when in the course of a few weeks after a dose of agraphis, I found that this dribbling had entirely ceased and that the general condition and even the hearing of the child had improved, I could not help feeling, taking all my experiences into consideration, that we have in agraphis a valuable remedy for mutism. The action of the agraphis upon deafness is apparently not direct, but is secondary, acting upon the glands connected with the orbit, the nasal cavities, the pharyngeal and buccal mucous membranes ; hence it is mutism, not so much *deaf*-mutism, for which I would specially recommend it. In addition to this, the agraphis exerts an action, which at present is undefined, upon the head, clearing and strengthening the memory, often removing tinnitus, and besides this it has an action, also quite ill-defined at present, upon the ovario-uterine sphere of the organism.

As additional clinical experiences corroborative of these statements will naturally be called for, I give short notes of cases : “ A man of about 45 years, who was inclined to general plethora, due in a great measure to continual tippling, and who suffered from constant hissing tinnitus, varying very much, with tendency to tough phlegm in the back of the throat and congestive headaches, reported decided relief after one dose of agraphis.”

“ Youth, æt. 19, nose always full of discharge, noticed on blowing it ; decided relief from one dose.”

“ Deafness, nine months' duration, in a woman of 70, with tendency to running from left nostril and fulness of tonsils, unable to hear in a noise, and loud talking confuses, east wind renders ears sensitive and induces neuralgia in the teeth and gums ; in this case the hearing returned two days after one dose of agraphis. The reality of the influence of the agraphis is open to doubt in this case, as these obstructive, catarrhal, tubal deafnesses come and go suddenly and with great irregularity. Still the agraphis was well indicated.”

“ In a girl of about 19, with deafness and stoppage of the nostrils ; a week after a single dose, nose went discharging all day and after this, stoppage of nose and hearing improved.”

“ A girl of 18, being treated for congested turbinated bones with blocked nostrils and, in whom the catamenia came too soon and hung about with yellowish discharge in intervals, the period came quite regularly and discharge ceased after one dose, and later on her mother noticed her tonsils smaller.”

“ Sickness and great pain in the pit of the abdomen at monthly period which latter was unusually copious and only lasted a day, since then quite well, but next period missed, and memory is bad ; had never before had irregularity, though her age, 43, is suspicious.”

“ Deafness, twenty years, and tinnitus in a man of 53, with weakness of voice and phlegm in back of nose, tendency to take cold and feverish towards midnight and chilly in the morning ; all these symptoms improved after one dose, though the improvement in the hearing was but slight.”

“ Discharge from nose gone and throat much clearer.—(Hospital patient's report).”

“ A lady of 32 who complained of plugs of phlegm continually rising in her throat found great relief after one dose.”

“ Harvey H., æt. 22, clerk to the School Board of London, deaf since childhood ; treated without benefit at a neighboring ear and throat institution, came to L. H. Hospital, October 8, 1892. H. D. R., 20 in. ; L. 14. R. m. ti., cicatricial scars. L. m. ti., hidden by dry discharge ; some post-nasal growths. Agrap. nut, ϕ A. October 22, 1892. Hears better certainly ; nose stopped more than usual, left ear discharging freer. R. 50 in. ; L. 40 in.—S. L., 2–3 a day.”

This ends our clinical experiences with agraphis and almost all point to its being essentially a catarrhal remedy, acting as before stated upon the throat, nose, eyes, ovario-uterine and cerebral regions and the glandular apparatus connected therewith.
